Freeze the Frame, Back it Up

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/45975892.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Charlie Countryman (2013), Adam (2009), HEU - Fandom, Hannibal Extended Universe - Fandom
Relationship:	Nigel (Charlie Countryman)/Adam Raki
Characters:	Nigel (Charlie Countryman), Adam Raki
Additional Tags:	Birthday, Fluff and Angst, Insecurity, Age Difference, Established Relationship, Nigel (Charlie Countryman) Loves Adam Raki, Mild Sexual Content
Language:	English
Series:	Part 26 of Sourweather Threads
Stats:	Published: 2023-03-24 Words: 1,727 Chapters: 1/1

Freeze the Frame, Back it Up

by sourweather

Summary

Nigel usually enjoys his birthdays, but this year he's feeling his age more than ever. Particularly in relation to his boyfriend.

Notes

had to wait for Aries season to write this because I wouldn't DARE imply that Nigel banyai was a PISCES

It's the twenty-fourth of March. The clock on the bedside table reads 'eight forty-six A.M.' And Nigel Banyai is lying awake in his bed, staring at the ceiling like he's in the fucking trenches, preparing himself for the worst day of his life.

Maybe that's melodramatic. He's had some apocalyptic fucking days in his life, after all. He doesn't need to walk any further than his bathroom mirror to be reminded of that. He reaches up, absently touching the old scar on his temple. The memory of how it got there doesn't sting quite as badly as it used to, but it still makes him wince.

Still, he can't shake the feeling that this is worse. Could be, anyway. At least the bullet to his skull didn't fucking kill him. But depending on how today plays out, he might not survive to see another sunrise. Worse still, the outcome is ultimately out of his hands. He can try every desperate, needy trick in the fucking book, and it still might all crash and burn around him.

Happy fucking Birthday.

Nigel's never cared much about aging before. If anything, he'd spent most of his life feeling like he was better than ever, with every passing year. Every year he got smarter, richer, better in bed. Every year people respected him more, feared him more, worked harder to please him. What's not to fucking love?

Not this year. This year he wants to fucking roll over in bed and wake up ten years younger instead. Hell, he'd settle for five. All of the dread currently sitting in the pit of his stomach is coming from one clear source. Ironically, the one place that usually gives Nigel nothing but joy.

Adam rolls in his sleep, humming slightly as he works to get comfortable. Fuck, he's perfection. Nigel stares at his back in open adoration. Drinking in his dark tousled curls, his fair skin, the constellation of little freckles that dot his shoulder blades. Nigel wants to pull him into his arms, caress every inch of that flawless body, but he lets Adam sleep.

The difference in their ages had been exciting, when they first met. He'd been forty-four, still licking the wounds Gabi left behind, and sweet Adam was only twenty-nine. Adam stared up at Nigel like he was some kind of fucking Adonis, gazing in awe at his scars and muscles like he couldn't imagine a man like him existing. And Nigel couldn't pretend he didn't get off on how easy it was to manhandle Adam around the bedroom, on the way Adam blushed when Nigel took charge. It was hot, but beyond its sexual appeal, it didn't feel like it made that big of a difference in their relationship.

But that was five years ago, give or take. And now Adam is thirty-four, and Nigel is fucking —

"Fifty," he groans to himself, dragging a hand down his stubbled cheek. Fifty fucking years old. He'd known it was coming, had plenty of time to prepare, and yet he still feels like he can't wrap his head around it. He doesn't *feel* fifty.

Not always, anyway. Sometimes, he very much does feel his age. When he notices how his hair is starting to turn more silver than gold, he feels it. When Adam catches him squinting and gently suggests he put on his reading glasses. He definitely fucking feels it in his body—softer than ever before and riddled with with a laundry list of aches and pains. Yeah, maybe he does feel fucking fifty.

But not with Adam. With Adam, he feels like a kid again. Like a clueless, fumbling teenager, just trying his best to look like he knows what he's doing and not give away that he's panicking inside.

The years have been good to Adam. He's barely aged a damn day, as far as Nigel can see. He's still a fucking angel. Always will be. And those fifteen years between then that had once felt unimportant now have Nigel scared to death.

Adam might not always believe it, but he's a total catch. Nigel tells him so constantly, makes it crystal clear that he's the luckiest man on the planet because Adam gives him the fucking time of day. Not just because he's beautiful, either, though he is. Adam is brilliant, passionate, kind but always honest about it. He's everything a man could want.

So what is he doing wasting his years with *Nigel?* A washed-up former criminal, who might be too old to even keep up with him soon? At least he'll be financially set when Nigel croaks, he thinks bitterly. Maybe that's why Adam's sticking around.

He shakes himself, trying to banish the thought. That's Nigel's frightened fucking head talking, that's not Adam. Adam wouldn't do something like that. No, it's much more likely that Adam will just leave when Nigel grows too old for him, taking Nigel's heart with him. God, he's not going to survive it when it happens. It'd be kinder for Adam to just off him, inherit all the money and be done with it. Shame that Adam never had the stomach for it. The angel catches spiders in a cup and sets them out on the balcony, for Christ's sake.

Nigel glances to the side, and jumps when he sees sleepy blue eyes staring back at him. Apparently Adam had rolled back over while Nigel was busy catastrophizing. Heaven help him, the sight of those eyes is enough to make him smile, rotten mood be damned.

"Good morning, gorgeous," he says, and Adam smiles back.

"Happy Birthday."

He tries to repress the grimace that rises. "Is it?"

Adam nods, hair bouncing as he props himself up on one elbow. "March twenty-fourth," he reminds Nigel. "That's your birthday. Did you forget?"

No, but he'd been hoping Adam might. "Course not, darling. Guess it's just too early."

"You woke up before the alarm," Adam notes, and he frowns to himself. "You never do that."

Nigel shrugs. "I've had a lot on my mind, that's all."

"Oh." The frown on his face only gets deeper.

"What's wrong?"

Adam huffs. "I had a plan for your birthday, that's all. Now it won't work."

It makes his heart tighten with fondness. "Don't tell me you were gonna bring me breakfast in bed."

"I wasn't."

Nigel chuckles. Adam's bluntness never gets old, even after all their years together. "Okay."

"I was planning to wake you up with a blow job."

Fuck. He's kicking himself, now. Stayed up all night worrying, when he could've been pulled from sleep in the best way fucking possible. "You wanted to spoil me, huh?"

Adam nods, smiling coyly. "I can make you breakfast instead, though, if you want. Since you're already awake."

"Hang on, starlight," he says quickly, grabbing Adam's arm before he can leave their bed. "I-I can go back to sleep."

Adam's eyes narrow when he laughs. He crawls over Nigel's body, coming to straddle his lap. "You don't need to do that."

Nigel shuts his eyes, mimics a loud, dramatic snore. Adam's giggling fills the room. "Is it working?" he asks, cracking one eye open. "You convinced?"

He hums into it when Adam lowers himself to catch Nigel in a kiss, the laughter melting away as his hands move to roam over Adam's body almost automatically. Adam grins against his lips as Nigel squeezes his ass, his body lax and warm and so, so inviting.

"I love you," Adam says. His nimble fingers card into Nigel's hair, playing idly with the strands.

Nigel tries to smile. "Yeah?" he prods. "Even though I'm an old man?"

Adam laughs again. It's not mean-spirited, and Nigel knows it, but it still makes him hot with embarrassment. "I don't think you're an old man, Ni."

"I'm fifty, doll," he says, and it makes his lip curl with distaste to say it out loud. "I'm old enough to be your fucking father."

"Only if you got someone pregnant in high school," Adam replies, nose wrinkled at the observation. "You do know that you've *always* been much older than me, don't you? I don't see how you being fifty today makes it different from yesterday."

And he doesn't have a good response to that. Half because he knows that Adam is fucking right, like always. Half because his brain is busy trying to work out where they've landed on the 'morning blow job' issue.

"I just don't want you to be forty-five and tied to a fucking geriatric," Nigel confesses, fingers curling tight around Adam's waist. "I want you to live your life, you know? Be happy. I don't want you to slow down for me."

Adam just smiles, soft and patient and so fucking lovely. "You're the one who's always saying that I live like an old man," he points out, then kisses him again. "I've never needed to slow down for you, Nigel. And if I ever do, someday, then I'll want to do it. Because I *am* living a life that makes me happy, and I want you in it."

Nigel's heart swells. He's so fucking in love. Always will be, no matter how many years go by. *"Stea căzută,"* he coos, taking Adam's face in both weathered hands. He draws Adam close, kisses him long and slow. "I love you, too."

Their kisses are tender, for a while. But eventually, the parts of Nigel that still haven't got the fucking memo about not being young anymore take over. He licks his way into Adam's mouth, and the younger man rolls his hips against him with a breathy sigh.

"Do you want to have sex now?" Adam asks between increasingly hungry kisses. "Because you might want to open your birthday present before we have sex."

The implication sets his heart racing. "Little minx, what'd you get me?"

Adam's smile is so sweet that it loops back around to being sexy. "I got you a few things, actually. Do you want me to get the box?"

Leave it to Adam Raki to make him feel twenty-fucking-five again. "God, yes."

Adam crawls out of his lap with an eager grin, pressing one more kiss to Nigel's lips.

"Happy Birthday, Ni," he whispers, and then he's scurrying off to fetch Nigel's gift.

Yeah, maybe it is a good fucking day after all.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!